



Drummer Street Bus Station, 1920s 63.74

c.44.6: Cambridge DRUMMER STREET Scrapbook by Mike Petty

1900

1900 04 19

Cambridge Town Council were told a conference had been held between two members of the committee and the Master and Bursar of Emmanuel College with reference to the construction of a new street from Drummer Street to St Andrew's Street, and the closing and giving up of Emmanuel Street to the college.

1901 04 18

Cambridge Council reported that in 1900 a meeting had been held with Emmanuel College as to the terms of exchange of the site of Emmanuel Street for a piece of ground to form a new street from St Andrews Street to Drummer Street. The existing street was the chief means of access to the centre of the town and carried a very considerable proportion of traffic with 1,030 cyclists on Saturday. The new road would be nearly 100 feet shorter and wider. Mr Campkin suggested the advantage would rest largely with the College.

1920

1924 12 02

The question of a parking place for buses and private motor cars was discussed at some length by Cambridge town council. The Watch Committee suggested that Drummer Street should be used as a parking place for motor cars and buses. The Surveyor submitted a plan which included taking in a portion of Christ's Pieces. It was resolved that the scheme should not be entertained and a proposal be considered for constructing a parking place on Butts Green

1925 08 08

The Corporation seems to have stirred up a good deal of indignation by their proposals with regard to the Drummer Street "motor park". In a town like Cambridge it certainly seems unwise to do anything that may detract from its attractiveness. A suggestion has been put that the 'park' should be established on Butt's Green and not at Drummer Street at all. A petition has been presented to the Mayor asking her to call at Town's meeting and it is hoped that the request will be acceded to.

1925 08 10

Sir – Much has been written about the street lighting of Cambridge. Emmanuel Road, Emmanuel Street and Drummer Street are all under repair and consequently all the main road traffic has to proceed via Clarendon Street or New Square. Yet in the whole length of these roads not a single lamp is lighted at nights. In fact in the whole district there is not one lamp. Isn't it time that something was done to instil a little sense into the heads of those who direct the town affairs? It is false economy to make the streets danger traps for motorists, cyclists & pedestrians. – F.I. Cowles

1925 08 12

The protest meeting against the taking of part of Christ's Pieces for parking motor vehicles attracted a crowd of over 2,000 people to Drummer Street & was marked by a remarkable climax. After a resolution of protest had been passed the crowd voted a desire to take it to the Mayor that night. Speeches had been delivered from a four-wheeled waggon and the shafts were quickly manned and the waggon containing councillors who had spoken was dragged at a good pace to the Mayor's house in Newton Road. Something like a 1,000 people followed in its wake.

1925 11 09 c

Three undergraduates were fined £2 each for extinguishing street lamps. James Haynes, a watchman said he saw the gentlemen approach Drummer Street. They overturned the brazier containing his fire and he had to put the fire out because the tar on the pavement commenced to flare. He saw them turn out the light of a lamp in Emmanuel Street. Two of them hoisted another up to do this. In Short Street they turned out three more lights and another five were turned out along Victoria Avenue

1925 11 28

Drummer Street parking, p8

1926 11 06

Drummer Street, p6*

1927 07 23 c

Cambridge council considered the erection of advertising boards by the Empire Marketing Committee at Corn Exchange Street, Market Hill, Drummer Street, Butts Green, Northampton Street and the Cattle Market. But the path in Corn Exchange Street was only five feet wide and it would be dangerous if people stopped there to look at it. They would have to put up another sign, "Safety first. Passengers must not stop to look at this advertisement". (Laughter).

1928 03 10

A man told Cambridge magistrates he had been asked for some side screens for a motor car. He got into a Morris Oxford car in Drummer Street parking place, Cambridge, and drove it as far as the cemetery. He took the side screens out, rolled them up in a rug and sold them to an Ely man for a £1 note and an electric motorcycle lamp.

1928 09 17

Augustine Crossman, manager of the A.R.C. Knitting Works, Abbey Walk, Cambridge told the court he had left his Morris Oxford car at the Drummer Street parking place and when he returned it was missing. When found next day the spare wheel had been changed, the tyre being seriously damaged. The inner tube had been taken out and put under the rear seat. The body of the car had been strained, one of the doors leaving a gap when closed and the bonnet had dropped away from the radiator. A

quantity of petrol and oil had been used and a pair of sun goggles stolen. The damage came to something over £10.

1928 09 21

Cambridge Watch Committee granted Messrs Brown Bros a further licence for a Lancia coach to ply for hire at Drummer Street on condition that only one of their buses is to stand there at any one time. But Ortona had six to 14 buses there at a time & Messrs Brown advertised fares at 6d to a shilling cheaper. Ortona paid the Council £250 towards the rates but if the public was being charged extra it was time this was dispensed with. A custom had grown up amongst police and other to give Ortona preference because they sent buses to various places, whilst the others went to only one.

1930

1934 03 08

A question of moving back the railings on Christ's Pieces to extend the Drummer Street parking station again came before the council. Councillor Stubbs had opposed it from the first; at weekends there was congestion of buses in Drummer Street at a place where pedestrians were crossing. Councillor Few said it was unfair to the railways who had to find their own land for parking: it was the buses that took up the space and it was wrong to give up public property for them. But Mrs Hartree said the car park was chiefly for the people from the rural surroundings and was very important. The vote was tied. 34 03 08

1938 03 21

Eastern Counties Omnibus Company complained of difficulties manoeuvring their buses at the Drummer Street terminus. They suggested the Corporation reduce the width of the footpath. The Borough Surveyor disagreed. He suggested that the space reserved for the parking of cars should be reduced by 54 feet from the high kerb against the coffee stall. But the Watch Committee decided that the time was now approaching when Eastern Counties should cease to use Drummer Street and consider the provision elsewhere of their own bus station 38 03 21a

1938 03 25

Drummer Street park was made for private cars, and now they seemed to be letting the Bus Company monopolise it; they should find a parking place of their own, a councillor urged. But Ald Starr said it was opened not for private cars but for the benefit of the working men and women who came into Cambridge by bus. Now it was used as a car park by professional and business people who left their vehicles there all morning and afternoon. Coun Stubbs said they were at their wits' end to know what to do with the traffic. It was easy to talk about telling the Bus Company to find a new park, but where could they go? 38 03 25a

1940

1942 01 17

Jim Wooders has minded parcels at Drummer Street, Christ's Lane for 23 years – photo – 42 01 17

1947 10 04

A bus driver who allowed his sympathy to exceed his caution was fined a total of £6 when he appeared before the Cambridge Petty sessions. PC Bert Patton was on patrol duty at 6.30 pm when he saw the single decker Premier Travel bus in Trumpington Street. He noticed it was a twenty seater being used as an express carriage. Besides those seated there were 20 adult passengers standing. Several more were sitting on the steps at the entrance, and on the right of the driver there was a passenger sitting on the emergency door, the window of which was open. The body of this passenger was protruding outside the bus for a distance of nine inches. The constable allowed the defendant to drive the vehicle to Drummer Street so as not to inconvenience the passengers. Here he pointed out that the vehicle was being used as an express carriage and there should have been no people standing. To this the driver replied "Well, you cannot very well leave them behind"

1947 10 10

A proposal to improve Drummer Street bus station was discussed at Cambridge Town Council. Ald Briggs said "Drummer Street is already overcrowded and traffic is going to increase in the coming years". The Committee had discussed a suggestion that a portion of Butt Green should be used as a bus station and had previously considered the use of New Square as a bus station. Coun Cutting considered that the proposal was too urgent to wait, "If you saw last year the thousands standing out in the cold in Drummer Street you would not have thought it was any credit to the town"

1949 05 03

The Drummer Street bus station is a topic always sure of a lively discussion at Women's Institute meetings. At the annual meeting of the Cambridgeshire Federation the present provisions were condemned in no uncertain terms. A Fulbourn member thought it would be a waste to spend more money on the existing system, which was all wrong. Advocating the use of New Square she spoke of the danger to children running across the road after school to catch buses. "There will be a fatal accident there before long, then perhaps something will be done", she said

1950

1951 05 05

Drummer Street bus station glazed with armour plated glass, p10

1951 05 17

Drummer Street parking, p7

1951 06 29

The new Civic mobile canteen was officially opened by Ald W.J. Briggs, chairman of the Cambridge Communal Feeding Committee. The brand new, beautifully equipped caravan will be a great asset to the city as a whole, and even more so to the people who use the Drummer Street bus station. It replaces the old stall which used to be there. The whole thing is in charge of the City Catering Officer, Mrs C. Howson. It is expected to be open from 8.30am to 10pm on week-days and from 2pm to 9pm on Sundays.

1952 05 05

Cambridge city council would like to see Christ's Lane opened out as a thoroughfare to be used by the omnibuses and other traffic to alleviate congestion in the City centre and provide relief for Emmanuel Street. The present country bus station at Drummer Street would then become the main stopping place for the local buses which now pick up and set down passengers in Sidney Street constricting the traffic flow. They also propose a new road on the line of Post Office Terrace to Wheeler Street. With Corn Exchange Street widened this would provide for a good circulation of traffic in the city centre.

1952 10 23

Proposals for the bus station at Drummer Street, Cambridge, were discussed at the Planning Inquiry. The bus company preferred a station to be sited on New Square which was double the area of Drummer Street. But would passengers agree – and they are entitled to be considered sometimes. Half to two-thirds would use Emmanuel Street. The amount of bus traffic would increase if greater provision was made & there would be a traffic blockage at Four Lamps roundabout

1952 11 05

Much of the congestion in the central area of Cambridge could be dealt with by providing car parks in the right places rather than the provision of extra circulatory routes the Chief Constable told the Development Plan inquiry. Closing of Magdalene Street would inevitably lead to an increased use of the Backs and the proposed spine relief road would not afford relief to traffic in the city centre. The police had received many complaints concerning the amount of noise at Drummer Street bus station late at night. By moving it to New Square this objection would be alleviated

1952 11 20

Edward Lainson of Premier Travel told the Development Plan Inquiry that it would be highly undesirable to move the bus station from Drummer Street to New Square. Access would be difficult and the crossing of Emmanuel Road by a large number of people would constitute a danger. It would cause congestion because a lot of people who found the buses handy would start using their cars

1954 01 09

A large meteorite is believed to have been seen over Cambridge. Following reports that an explosion, thought to have been due to a meteorite smashing into the earth's atmosphere, had rocked Dieppe about 160 miles from Cambridge, several members of the City Police Force have claimed to have seen the object. P.C. R. Barlow, on duty in Drummer Street described 'a meteorite of exceptional size, oval-shaped and green in colour' falling in a south-east direction. Other policemen claim to have seen the flash as it apparently struck the earth.

1954 02 12

The elm tree on the pavement near the junction of Drummer Street and Emmanuel Road, Cambridge, is probably 250 years old. It is a little over 70 feet in height and sixteen feet in circumference. In the 1940s some of the lower branches were removed to prevent contact by omnibuses but now extensive rotting has taken place in the main branches. These should be removed and any hollows scraped out and filled with concrete, but in view of its scientific interest as much as possible should be retained. The Botanic Garden hopes to perpetuate samples from the old tree by grafting some of its twigs on to young elms

1954 09 18

It may interest readers to know that the short thoroughfare from St Andrews' Street to Drummer Street, now known as Christ's Lane, has changed its name more than any other in Cambridge. Old maps show it as Hangman's Lane, St Nicholas' Lane, Rogis Lane, Rogues' Lane, Hinton Lane and George Street. Downing Street has been Dowdivers Lane, Langrith Lane, Hogshill Lane, Bird Bolt Lane and Plot and Nuts Lane.

1956 07 14

Mr Stanley Woolston has removed his antiques business to Pembroke Street. It is a wrench to leave his former premises in St Andrew's Street after 30 years where he has been honoured by the gracious patronage of members of the Royal Family. But the buildings have been affected by the redevelopment of Emmanuel Street and plans to link Drummer Street with a shopping arcade. He will retain his warehouse at the end of Bradwell's Yard until the area is ripe for rebuilding. 56 07 14

1956 11 27

A proposal to close Christ's Lane and provide an alternative footway between Drummer Street and St Andrew's Street was approved in 1954. But now Christ's College have proposed an alternative consisting of an arcade leading into a central courtyard then through another arcade to Drummer Street. The council would be responsible for maintaining, cleaning and lighting it. 56 11 27a

1956 12 04

If you have seen a street fight and want to report it or are a motorist lost in Cambridge and want to know your way, it is simple. You go to the nearest Police Pillar, open the door and pick up the telephone inside. At once you are in touch with the information room at police headquarters. The Mayor made the first 'emergency' call from the Police Pillar in Drummer Street and within minutes a sleek black saloon containing two stalwart policemen drew up. 56 12 04

1957 08 23

Plans have been announced for a modern shopping arcade linking St Andrew's Street and Drummer Street bus station, replacing the Christ's Lane. There would be a two-storey block of shops facing an

open court together with a waiting room for bus passengers and basement parking for 21 cars and 100 bicycles. 57 08 23b & c

1958 02 10

Whippet Coaches were refused permission to use Drummer Street. Eastern Counties had paid for improvements to the bus station and 85 per cent of their country services were not remunerative. This would add to competition. The Chief Constable said it was already filled and if granted other operators from the Northampton Street terminus would also apply, leading to increased congestion. 58 02 10

1958 07 07

Drummer Street instead of Merton Arms for Whippet coaches – 58 07 07

1960s The Cambridgeshire Collection has newspaper cuttings files from this date

1960

1960 01 23

Bradwell's Court, the new public footway linking St Andrew's Street with Drummer Street, was opened for the first time this week. At the same time Christ's Lane, the old cobbled pathway, was closed. With an arcade at each end and an 'open style' court in the centre, the new thoroughfare is flanked by 13 shops 60 01 23c

1960 05 13

Have you ever been shopping and wanted to get rid of the heaviest of your parcels, or needed somewhere to park a suitcase or bicycle? Here in Cambridge one example of private enterprise has a solution for this kind of problem. If you travel regularly to and from Drummer Street 'bus station you will know Jim Wooders, who sits at the end of Christ's Pieces and has been looking after parcels for well over 30 years 60 05 13c

1961 04 14

Cambridge Civic Restaurant produces over 1,000 meals a day either for consumption in its spacious contemporary dining room or for the Drummer Street Mobile Canteen or W.V.S. Meals-on-Wheels service. The premises at the Old Post Office in Petty Cury may have to be demolished as part of the Lion Yard scheme but the Manageress, Mrs Gillett and her staff of 30, including Mrs E. Stubbings who has been vegetable cook for the last 18 years have become very attached to the restaurant and regard their customers as 'one big family' which needs feeding. 61 04 14b

1962 08 11

Bradwell's Court arcade and shop development has been a joint venture between Jesus and Christ's Colleges and Ravenseft Properties. It stretches from St Andrew's Street through to Drummer Street bus station and provides a continuous covered route to the city centre. Work demolishing the out-of-date shops and buildings started as long ago as October 1957 but was held up by difficulties over leases. The last tenant to go was the well-known antique dealer, Mr K.A. Rowe. By the time the University term begins again the development will be complete and all the 20 new shops and showrooms fully occupied. 62 08 11a

1965 04 30

Jim Wooders looks after parcels Drummer Street bus station for 40 years; started 1922 – 65 04 30e

1970

1977 07 13

A group of Cambridge residents have started a legal battle to stop buses using the narrow, congested Parker Street to reach the city's Drummer Street bus station. They are trying to force four major bus

companies to use an alternative route via Emmanuel Street and Regent Street. The leader of the objectors said: "Parker Street is fit only for local traffic, being narrow and with houses on each side. At the moment the pollution is disgusting. You cannot open a window and the noise is above acceptable limits". The Eastern Counties traffic manager said: "Buses represent only a tiny proportion of the heavy traffic using the street, so why we are being picked on I don't know"

1978 10 03

Cambridge' Drummer Street bus station may be extended on to the adjoining Christ's Pieces within the next few years as County Council traffic experts and the bus companies have agreed that expansion of the present site is the best way of bringing it up to date. The facilities such as booking office, news-stands & toilets are scattered, cramped and unsightly and there are no proper information displays. The city council has suggested the station should be moved into the Kite Area and Conservation interests prefer disused land near the railway station should be used. But the County rejects both locations

1979 03 07

A new double-decker bus station in the centre of Cambridge is being proposed by County traffic experts. Buses would wait only long enough to set down and take up passengers and long-distance buses would run from elsewhere in the city. This one of several options to sort out the chaos of Drummer Street. Others include expanding on to Christ's Pieces, re-siting it to the Kite area or adjacent to the railway station. For years the bus station has been the subject of intensive criticism because of its lack of facilities and poor conditions. Now councillors have made it a priority.

1979 09 28

Drummer Street, p1

1979 12 08

Drummer Street, p1

1980

1980 03 13

New plans for Drummer Street bus station have provoked widespread criticism from councillors. The two-storey building to accommodate offices and waiting facilities is a large transparent structure with a domed roof. But Coun Peter Wright said: "It looks like a large greenhouse; to see anything like that going up in the middle of a conservation area is absolutely unbelievable". Maurice Garner said: "I cannot say I like it – but nothing can be worse than what we have". It would be difficult for handicapped people to reach the upper floor waiting rooms. 80 03 13a

1980 09 03

Visitors to Cambridge will be confused if they use the latest Ordnance Survey map of the city. The Lion Yard shopping centre, completed more than five years ago, is not shown but marked as a collection of tiny streets. Christ's Lane, closed for the past 15 years and not even visible, is still shown as leading from Drummer Street to St Andrew's Street whilst the University Centre is an empty space. Even the Tourist Information Centre is shown as at the front of the Guildhall, rather than the back. The O.S. said it did not seem very satisfactory 80 09 03b

1981 07 16

Drummer Street lavatories are smelly, bits of string helped tie the lavatory chains and the pipes were lagged with sacking. At Park Street there was no paper in any of the cubicles, no soap and no towels. One seat was missing entirely. Valiant efforts are being made to keep the subterranean convenience on the market square clean – you have only to look at the gleaming brass handrail and inhale the disinfectant smell. But I wouldn't want to have to take a child in there, even in an emergency. 81 07 16

1982 07 08

Chaotic Drummer Street is a nightmare for passengers and bus drivers during the busy rush hours. Nobody knows where their buses are and if you go to the information offices the queues are so long that by the time you get to the desk the bus will have gone anyway. Premier Travel driver Hedley Hammond said he was five minutes late already and couldn't get round to his bay. Dismal and dilapidated the worn-out bus station just can't cope with the traffic of the 1980s. 82 07 08a & b

1982 08 27

City councillors want a full-scale transport complex to give quick interchange for rail and bus passengers on long distance and local services to be sited at the railway station. There is plenty of parking with toilet and refreshment facilities already on hand. The County Council's controversial plans to spend £400,000 on rebuilding Drummer Street bus station would still leave it a cramped site with poor access. 82 08 27

1983 06 29

Plans for a new main bus station with a 'floating roof' and a circular office block standing alongside, in the centre of Cambridge, have come in for fierce criticisms. The County Council is adamant that the new bus station should go on the present small and restricted site in Drummer Street but the Labour-controlled City Council want it moved to the railway station. The rebuilding will see the removal of the small island with its office and large trees from the centre of the road. But the City is refusing to sell the island site or to remove the trees as part of its opposition. 83 06 29 p15

1983 09 20

Drummer Street, p11

1984 05 01

Drummer Street island, p7

1985 10 22

The Government has given the green light for the controversial £500,000 plan for rebuilding Cambridge bus station. They have given the County permission to buy a small 'island' of land in the centre of Drummer Street owned by the city council. It was the only thing standing in the way of the proposed rebuilding plans. But the scheme is unlikely ever to go ahead. The new County council administration wants to build a long-distance coach terminal at the railway station instead, saying it would ease city centre bus congestion. 85 10 22

1986 04 02

Drummer Street bus station – officially described as a 'disaster area' - is to have a major face-lift, the first since it was built 60 years ago. An island at the centre of the site with a number of small booking offices will be demolished and the central area refurbished. The aim is to tidy up one of the most prominent sites in the city centre, the one first seen by thousands of tourists. It currently has poor passenger facilities and operating conditions and is in urgent need of improvement. 86 04 02b

1986 06 24

Drummer Street bus station renovation criticised – 86 06 24

1987 12 01

Cambus has bought the entire coach operation of arch rivals Premier Travel. Premier, founded in 1936 has dominated the Cambridge travel scene in recent years and is expecting record profits. It has a fleet of 75 coaches based in Kings Hedges Road and all 129 employees in the coach division will become employees of Cambus. Earlier this year the two companies started a joint venture involving a travel centre at Drummer Street bus station. 87 12 01